

1490. ee. 2

THIRD EDITION, WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS
TO THE POSTSCRIPT.

E P I S T L E

TO

P E T E R P I N D A R.

(PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIX-PENCE.)

T. BAYLIS, PRINTER,
Greville Street, Hatton-Garden.

THIS BOOK ON THE HISTORY OF THE
TO THE



THE

(THE TWO VOLUMES AND THE

THE
THE

EPISTLE
TO
PETER PINDAR.

BY
THE AUTHOR OF THE BAVIAD.

Enfin ton impudence,
Téméraire Vieillard! aura sa récompense. CORNEILLE.

MISCREANT! the scourge that you to-day endure,
Cuts to the bone—but then it cuts to cure.

THIRD EDITION, WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS TO THE
POSTSCRIPT.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. WRIGHT, PICCADILLY.

1800.

Pindar (Peter) print, etc.

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EPISTLE

TO

PETER PINDAR



THE AUTHOR OF THE FAVAR

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THIRD EDITION, WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS TO THE

POSTSCRIPT

LONDON

PRINTED FOR J. WRIGHT, MANCHESTER

1860

INTRODUCTION.

IT has been my good fortune, in company with many others infinitely my superiors in talents and worth, to attract, for a long series of years, the scurrility of "a wholesale dealer in doggerel rhymes,"* known by the nick-name of Peter Pindar. As I really considered his abuse as a tribute to my little, my less than little, merit, I received it, as became me, with modest silence, and made no boast of the satisfaction it gave me.

On the appearance of the "Pursuits of Literature," this Peter grew more elaborate in his scurrility, and I more pleased. I love to gratify my readers, and shall therefore extract, from that justly celebrated work, the passage which relates to him. It is, I believe, pretty generally known already; nevertheless, I will venture, as Shakspeare says, to "stale it a little more."

"In this verse" (where the name of Pindar occurs), "I speak of the great Theban; but there is an obscure person, styling himself PETER PINDAR, of whom I shall say a few words. This man certainly possesses a species of humour; but it is exhausted

* Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine.

by a repetition of the *same* manner, and nearly the *same* ideas, even to disgust. He has the power of rhyming ludicrously, and is sometimes even gifted with poetry; and finally he is puffed up with a vanity and self-conceited importance, almost without a parallel. This *obscure* man has contrived, by these qualifications, to thrust himself upon the public notice, and become the scorn of every man of character and of virtue. Such is the blasphemy, such is the impiety, the obscenity, the impudence, and the contempt of all decent respect, which pervades his numerous pamphlets in verse, that the reader is ill repaid by the sallies of humour which animate this mass of crudities. I will not waste a verse on such a character; but say honestly and plainly, that though I can sometimes be pleased with the manner, yet I think I perceive such a rooted depravity and malignity of heart, that, from the consideration of his works, I can affirm almost unequivocally of this obscure man in the words of the severest writer of antiquity:

“ Stupet hic vitio, et fibris increvit opimum

“ Pingue, caret culpâ, nescit quid perdat, et alto

“ Demersus, summa rursum non bullit in unda.”

“ N. B.—This man's works, now published (1794), amount in value to above *Four Guineas*; but we are informed that a set may be had for two guineas and a half in 4to, or for two guineas in 8vo!!! What an inducement to a purchaser!!! Posterity (if it can be supposed that such trash should exist) will be astonished that

that the present age could look with patience on such malignant ribaldry."—P. of L. p. 51.

This passage, and indeed the whole work, Peter did me the honour (and a very great honour I should have thought it from any other hand) to attach to my name; and frequent and furious were the thrusts aimed at me in consequence of it, from the by-corners of every news-paper, magazine and review * into which he was permitted to creep. None of them reached me, as I have already observed; or if they did, it was merely to tickle; and I passed on, like a great lady of yore, "in maiden meditation, fancy free."

But fortune had not yet done with us. In the "Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine" (a work of which the good effects are hourly becoming more and more manifest) there appeared, a few months since, the following strictures on Peter, in the course of a very admirable critique on his "Nil Admirari."

"Peter seems to think it strange that the ladies, instead of

* I have been told that the unmanly reflections on me in the Critical Review, where I have been wantonly insulted—not for what I did write, for that is a matter of course, but for what I did not—were all furnished by Peter Pindar!! If this be true, the Editors of that work are more to be pitied than I am. Enough of this. I have offended these gentlemen—they, perhaps, know how, for I do not;—and I neither look for candour nor justice at their hands, nor, indeed, am I at all solicitous about the matter—only, methinks, I could wish that when I am to be cut up, they would call in, if it were but for the credit of their slaughter-house, some less bungling butcher than Peter Pindar.

smiling

smiling themselves at his doggerel, should wonder "how the world can *smile*." We may possibly be able to suggest some few reasons, which might have restrained even the strongest propensity in those ladies, and in every virtuous mind, to *smile*, were his pages calculated, by their wit and pleasantry, which they certainly are not, to excite a smile, except, indeed, it be the smile of *contempt* at the impotence of his malice. They may probably have traced the progress of Peter from his first entrance into public life; they may have remarked the profligate priest, whose conversation exhibits a disgusting mixture of obscenity and blasphemy*; they may have heard of his mischievous disposition, when the obscure resident of a country town, employed in libelling his neighbours, and descending to the most mean and paltry arts for a subsistence; they may have followed him to town, endeavouring to live on the talents of a man whom he ostentatiously affected to patronize, under the express condition of receiving one-half of the produce of his labours; they may have watched him in his subsequent attempts to obtain notoriety

* "This man, or rather this monster in human shape, is in the habit of expressing a wish, founded on the excess of his attachment to mere sensual gratifications, that *God would grant him a lease of his life for 500 years*; and of bursting forth into impious exclamations which a religious mind shudders to think of—He has even been known to exclaim "G—d blast death; I could spit in G—d's face for inventing death"—Following up this horrid blasphemy with an action corresponding with the sentiment!!! It will easily be conceived, that to such a being as this, the idea of death cannot be very consolatory!"

and

and wealth, by bribing the servants of his Sovereign to betray their trust, to reveal his family secrets, and to expose all those little foibles from which no man upon earth is exempt, in order to render them objects of public derision and scorn; recollecting, no doubt, that the régicides of France attempted to render their Sovereign ridiculous before they ventured to murder him; they may have marked his progress from seditious to treasonable insinuations, in recommending it to subjects occasionally to behead their Monarchs; they may have noted the invariable tendency of his works to depreciate worth, and to calumniate virtue, not only forgetting, but absolutely perverting, the very object of satire—the correction of vice; and they may, lastly, have heard of his base acceptance of a salary from that government which he had incessantly vilified, to write in opposition to the very men whose principles and whose conduct he had invariably praised*.

—A recollection of these facts would, we should apprehend, suffice to check a *smile*, and to justify any expression of surprise, that the world should *smile* at *such* productions of *such* a Bard.—We confess, it appears to us, that any readers who were apprized of these circumstances and could *smile*, must not only

* “Lest he should dare to deny this assertion, as we know he has been in the habit of doing, especially at Bath, we will remind him that there is written evidence of the fact in existence; and we will also recall to his recollection, his fraudulent intentions, his scandalous evasions, and his cowardly escape, “chop-fallen and confounded,” when challenged with his baseness, and called upon to retract the impudent falsehoods which he had dared to advance.—He at least will understand us.”

sympathize with the feelings, but favour the principles of the man;—proofs of a weak head and a bad heart.”

These strictures,* of which I knew nothing till I saw them in print, Peter also thought fit, with his habitual disregard of truth

* I have great pleasure in mentioning, that while I was transcribing them for the press, I received from New York a republication of a poem printed in this country, called the “Unsexed Females,” accompanied by an Appendix containing the very passages I have taken from the “Anti-Jacobin Review.” As few copies of this work have probably reached England, I shall present my reader with the brief introduction of the American Editor. Peter, whose most familiar expression is “better be damn’d than not mentioned,” will be delighted at finding that his infamy is talked of in more than one hemisphere.

“With Peter’s satirical pieces almost every reader is, in some degree, acquainted. Few will want to be told that his chief delight has ever consisted in ridiculing the *wise* and the *virtuous*; but, it is far from being generally known, in this country (America), that the last effort of his malignant and impious pen was pointed at *Miss Hannah More*, a lady who has long been looked upon as an honour to her sex and her country.”

“MISS MORE published, last year, “*Strictures on Female Education*,” which were mentioned with high encomiums, in a note which the Bishop of London added to his last Pastoral Charge. Peter Pindar (who is truly a fiend in human shape); saw, with pain, the extraordinary success of a work, wherein genius was displayed in support of morality and religion; and, casting behind him the consequences, he resolved to attack, not the work, but its author, which he did in a string of ribald poems, entitled “*Nil Admirari*.”

“This *direct* attack on virtue and religion, this unbearable outrage on morals, on decency, and on common sense, seems, at last, to have roused, against the profligate poetaster, the public indignation, which is well expressed in the following critique, extracted from the “*Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine*,” for November last.”

and

and decency, to impute to me, and became absolutely frantic.— After raving from November to June, his malady seems to have found a temporary alleviation in a copious discharge of abuse, which, like Edmund Curl's, of filthy memory, savours strongly of the place in which it was produced. If it has preserved him, though but for an instant, from the horrors of a strait waistcoat, I am satisfied ; and cheerfully give him leave to repeat the operation as often as he fancies it will do him good. “ If a man will be beaten with brains,” says our old bard, “ he shall wear nothing clean about him.” Certainly, with *brains*; but the filthy drivel of this impotent dotard, which never yet fell an inch beyond his own beard, can reach nobody, and, impure as it is, can sully nothing but himself.

It is singular that Peter Pindar* should father on me every ac-

* Why the fellow took the name of *Pindar*, it is not easy to say. Some *alias*, I will allow, it was proper for him to take ; for the name he originally went by, had long been synonymous with every thing base and infamous ; and was, therefore, to be laid aside : but still it remains a question why he took that of Pindar. Pindar, it is true, wrote Odes, but they have nothing in common with the draggled-tailed doggerel of Peter ; nor does he differ less in his moral and literary character, than in his poetical one, from this beastly profaner of his name. Pindar was a man of piety, a sincere follower of the religion of his country, and a warm and enthusiastic admirer of every great and illustrious name ; while Peter ———, but I disdain to pursue the contrast.

I will only add, that Pindar was loved and admired while living, and honoured and lamented when dead : while Peter has been scorned and abhorred through a long and profligate life ; and when he drops, as he soon must, into the grave, will be fol-

count of himself or his works, which happens to displease him; more especially, as I never shewed any forwardness in talking about him or his ribaldry (which, indeed, I seldom saw), and have no acquaintance with any person whatever, who has the misfortune to call him friend. This singularity, I am persuaded, could only arise from a consciousness of having merited my resentment by a series of wanton and unprovoked attacks, which his silly vanity represented as formidable, and which my conviction of their deplorable imbecility incessantly led me to despise and forget.

followed by the hate and detestation of all but Atheists and Traitors. The rest will experience at his death, some portion of that pleasure which disburthened Italy felt when Tisiphone (his sister-fiend) after sowing the seeds of rancour and animosity, opened the jaws of Acheron, and plunged to her native hell

——— rupto ingens Acheronte vorago
Pestiferas aperit fauces; quæis condita Erynnis,
Invisum numen, terras, cœlumque levabat!

Away then with the name of *Pindar*. Yet as Peter must have some name, and cannot with prudence take that of *W*——, I will present him with two—either of which will serve his turn to admiration. I speak of Peribomius and Natta—The first a sad, poor wretch, of whom I find this apologetical account:

——— hunc ego fatis
Imputo, qui vultu morbum, incessuque fatetur.

The second, cousin-german to the former, and whose resemblance to Peter has been already recognized by the author of the “Pursuits of Literature,” is thus described by my learned friend, Mr. Drummond,

Natta, to virtue lost, knows not its price,
Fattens in sloth, and STUPIFIES IN VICE;
Sunk in the gulph, immerg'd in guilt he lies,
Has not the power, nor yet the wish to rise.

And

And such is the manner in which I should have treated his last ebullition of frenzy, had it not been suggested to me, that Peter's perseverance in abuse evidently proceeded from an opinion that I feared him*. This was an idea which had never struck me, and which, indeed, I could not hear with patience, when it was first mentioned. *Fear!* No, never in my humblest moments did so unworthy a thought possess me as that of being suspected of fearing so feeble, so odious, so contemptible, so utterly despicable an object as Peter Pindar!

My literary career has been short and unimportant; and yet there is one part of it on which I look back with somewhat like pride: I mean the ridding of this country of Antony Pasquin. Antony, like Peter, was a general pest: he had been "fattening in his dungeon on the filthy dregs of slander and obscenity;" and when I dragged him forth to day, when I declared of him, what I should have no hesitation to declare of Peter, "that his

* I observe in one place, that Peter fancies he has mortified me by expressing his contempt of the Baviad. "I may," quoth he, "have said, &c. &c." Now, what he *may* have said is a matter of just as much indifference to me as what he may hereafter say: neither the one or the other ever engaged my thoughts for a single moment. But what bloated Aristarchus have we here? Gracious Heavens! Does Peter flatter himself that I want *his* praise? that I am solicitous for *his* good opinion? O Fortune! dear Fortune! whatever mishaps thou may'st have in store for me, do not, I beseech thee, subject me to that keenest of all mortifications, to that lowest of all degradations, the approbation of Peter Pindar!

D

acquaint-

acquaintance was infamy, and his touch poison," this abandoned miscreant had the temerity to come into a court of justice, and ask protection for his character.

I had taken care to furnish the counsel with a number of extracts from Antony's voluminous productions. Of these Mr. Garrow was permitted to read only a few, before he was interrupted by the indignation of the jury; when he broke forth into the following impassioned and eloquent address.

It is only necessary to premise, that I quote from the trial subjoined to the last edition of the Baviad; for so immediately does every word *apply* to Peter Pindar, that the reader might otherwise imagine it was fabricated for the purpose. The *application*, however, naturally arises from the perfect similarity of the two men*, both in the words of the Court, "PESTILENT PAUPERS,

* I have drawn up a parallel "after the manner of Plutarch" between Antony and Peter: there is some humour in it, and therefore I reserve it for a future publication, as I am unwilling to violate the seriousness of the present by any admixture of levity.

The only difference that struck me in the first design of my parallel, was that of Antony's ending where Peter began: I mean, with ridiculing His Majesty. In adverting, however, to Peter's adventures in Cornwall, I was soon satisfied that the resemblance was perfect throughout. Peter, like Antony, I perceived, began with small game, contenting himself with vilifying his friends and acquaintance: nor was it, till, like his co-rival, he had gone through a proper course of "purgings, pumpings, blanketings, and blows," that he grew timorous and wary, and confined him-

self

who go about through the public, levying contributions, and destroying every character in the community*."

I return to Mr. Garrow—"I see by your countenances, Gentlemen, that it is unnecessary to proceed any further with this man's infamous and abominable productions. I will not, therefore, harass your feelings; let them rest for the present.—But I will appeal to your sense of propriety,—to that of all who hear me, and ask, whether this COMMON LIBELLER, this vile traducer of honour and integrity, this HIRELING BLASTER of youth and innocence, should be suffered to come into this court and ask satisfaction for being described under the character he has voluntarily and ostentatiously assumed? Should he, who has been proved before you to be the author of works of which every line is a ca-

self almost entirely to insulting the King. I do not give Peter credit for much *sense*, but I know no fool that equals him in *cunning*, of which his reasoning on this subject is a notable sample. "I will take advantage," quoth he, "of the licence of the press, and attack my Sovereign. I will charge him with a thousand failings, a thousand errors. I will lie without measure, and without shame; he cannot reply, he will not punish: and I shall, without visiting the whipping-post or the pillory, derive a maintenance from the rabble of every denomination, who take a malignant delight in the aspersion of their superiors."

So reasoned Peter, and so, but somewhat too late, reasoned his full-brother Antony. We have seen the fate of the latter: that of the former is yet undecided,

SEWY EVI YRVAGSI KETCAL

* See Baviad, p. 182.

lunny,

lunny, sue for your protection, under the pretence that he has been calumniated? Shall he say to you, Gentlemen—I have been from my youth up earning a scandalous subsistence by VILI-FYING MY SOVEREIGN, *insulting his august family, belying his ministers, traducing his courts of justice, and slandering his subjects, FROM THE HIGHEST TO THE LOWEST*; give me, therefore, ample damages, because this dirty occupation is not sufficiently profitable?”

“ Shall he say, I have *violated the ear of modesty in my writings, I have ridiculed the ordinances of our Holy Religion, I have BLASPHEMED——*”

“ *Here some of the Jury got up, and Lord Kenyon desired Mr. Garrow to stop, for that more was evidently unnecessary.*”

He then said, “ that it was their duty to consider whether the
“ author of such works as they had heard read, and described,
“ had a right to call for damages.”

“ With what face,” continued his Lordship, “ can THIS
“ FELLOW find fault with the publication of the Defendant,
“ when it appears that the passage here libelled attaches to him
“ merely as Antony Pasquin, a name which he has prefixed
“ to writings of *the most infamous nature*. It appears to me,
“ that the author of the Baviad has acted a very meritorious part
“ in exposing this man; and I do most earnestly wish and hope
“ that some method will ere long be fallen upon, to prevent all
“ such UNPRINCIPLED AND MERCENARY WRETCHES from
“ going

“going about unbridled in society, to the great annoyance and
“disquietude of the public.”

The Jury, without a moment's hesitation, nonsuited the Plaintiff, and the audience hissed him out of Court; from whence, without staying to thank his counsel, he fled to America.

I do not expect to rid this country of Peter, nor do I, indeed, wish it, as he is too old and feeble for any useful purpose whatever; whereas Antony (his superior in every bodily endowment) drives a wheel-barrow, which, for his better accommodation, is chained to his middle, with great credit to himself, and great advantage to the community, along the Albany road. But I certainly do hope to turn him from his present course of iniquity, into a way of life more befitting his grey hairs*. If he must live, though, as a French wit once observed, I do not see the necessity of it; yet if he must live, I *do* certainly flatter myself with the idea of compelling him to seek the means—not in hawking about the refuse of Billingsgate and the Brothel, under

* I am much pleased with a passage in the Life of Burns. “I never saw him angry but twice,” says his biographer (p. 96), “once for some neglect in the foreman of the band; and the other time it was with an *old man* (it does not appear whether it was with Peter or not,) for using smutty inuendos, and double entendres. Were every *foul-mouthed old man* to receive a check in this way, it would be to the advantage of the rising generation.” Excellent!

the name of "Odes,"—but in penning elegies, and dying speeches for the felons of Newgate; an employ for which his years, and the poor dog-trot pace of his broken-winded muse, just appear to qualify him.

In the short view which I have given of the life of a man, who for near half a century, has persisted in defaming every thing that is great, and honourable, and virtuous, and holy amongst us, I labour less anxiously to shew how well he is qualified, by nature and habit, for the task, than to hold up to his few admirers (nearly, in my opinion, as worthless as himself,) a slight sketch of the man whom it has delighted them to honour; and to teach those who have attracted his notice, that is, his abuse, how little they have to apprehend from the malice of an impotent scribbler who, having wasted his youth and manhood in unprofitable depravity, is fallen in the dregs of life, into merited poverty, neglect, and contempt.

I can foresee but two objections that will be made to the following Epistle: its severity, and its unvarying tone of reprobation. I answer to the last, that Peter is the creature of the poet realized, the monstrum, nulla virtute redemptum à vitiis; and that if in the horrid monotony of such a man's life, nothing occurs of a light or amusing nature, the fault is not to be charged on me. I describe what I find, and rein in my imagination and my disposition to wander into pleasantry, with a strong and watchful hand. To the first objection, I have still a more ob-

vious

vious reply. I put it to the conscience of my readers, whether "a being who," as the "Anti-Jacobin Review" happily expresses it, "has rioted for years on the fruits of his rancour, his impudence, "and his falsehood," has any claims to tenderness? Add to this, that Peter is not a chicken. What would mangle another, only tickles him. Gross fat involves his heart, and, in the words of my motto, he must be "cut to the bone," before he will begin to wince. He is a very Vatinius. Indeed, on reflection, I think this name would suit him better than either of the two already provided for him. Vatinius, my reader knows, had made himself so odious to the Roman people by his vices (his Pindariana), that whenever he went abroad, men, women, and children followed him with cabbage-stalks, turnip-tops, rotten apples; nay, saith my author, even with pine-cones, till he took shelter in some brothel or gin-shop, for no other place would receive him. These peltings were repeated so often, that the poor wretch's head grew, at length, perfectly callous, and shattered all this vegetable artillery to atoms; so that the people were finally obliged, in their own defence, to have recourse to tiles and brick-bats!

With this I take my leave—humbly requesting the Critics when, after catching a glow of tender sensibility from the perusal of Peter's "most interesting Postscript," they proceed, from a due respect to the delicacy of his feelings, to reprobate the asperity of this retort—humbly requesting them, I say, to take
into

into their consideration, that I have borne his abuse for more than fifteen years, without a complaining word; that I never gave him, either directly, or indirectly, the slightest cause for offence; and that I now declare, in the most solemn and unequivocal manner, that, till the present moment, I never wrote a syllable concerning him in the whole course of my life.

The reader will observe that I have only conducted Peter to town. His subsequent adventures are reserved till his next effusion of malevolent dulness shall provoke me to come forward again. It must not be supposed, however, that I have exhausted his country atchievements.—No; the tythe of them are yet untouched. I have now in my hand a letter from an Officer who assisted in kicking him out of Maker Camp for his scandalous indecencies.

LONDON,

July 7, 1800.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE

TO

PETER PINDAR.

&c. &c.

WHILE many a NOBLE NAME, to virtue dear,
Delights the public eye, the public ear,
And fills thy canker'd breast with such annoy
As Satan felt * from innocence and joy;
Why, Peter, leave the hated culprit free, 5
And vent, poor driveller, all thy spite on me?

* ——— aside the Devil turned

For envy, yet with jealous leer malign

Ey'd them askance. ———

MILTON.

F

While

While pure Religion's beam, bane to thy sight,
O'er many a mitre sheds distinguished light,
And Prelates, in the path their SAVIOUR trod,
In trembling hope, "walk humbly with their God;" 10
Why, Peter, leave the hated culprits free,
And vent, poor driveller, all thy spite on me?

While, with a radiance yet to courts unknown,
Calm, steady dignity surrounds the Throne,
And the tried worth, the virtues, of thy King, 15
Deep in thy soul infix the mortal sting;
Why, Peter, leave the hated culprit free,
And vent, poor driveller, all thy spite on me?

Alas! scarce enter'd on the rolls of fame,
And but to ONE LOVED CIRCLE known by name, 20

How

How can I stead thee? Thou mayst toil, and strain,
Ransack for filth thy heart, for lies thy brain,
Rave, storm,—'tis fruitless all. Abuse, be sure,
Abuse of ME, will ne'er "one sprat" procure,
Bribe one night-cellar to admit thee in, 25
Purchase one draught of gun-powder and gin;
Seduce one brothel to display its charms,
Nor hire one hobbling strumpet to thy arms.

False fugitive! back to thy vomit flee—
Troll the lascivious song, the fulsome glee, 30
Truck praise for lust, hunt infant genius down,
Strip modest merit of its last half-crown,
Blow from thy mildew'd lips, on virtue blow,
And blight the goodness thou can'st never know;

'Tis

'Tis well. But why on ME?—While every tongue 35
Of thy rank slanders, ranker life, yet rung,
Pronounc'd thy name with mingled hate and dread,
And pour'd its whole abhorrence on thy head ;
I spoke not, wrote not : ne'er did aught of thine
Profane, thank Heaven! one thought, one word, of mine.
True : when I heard thy deep-detested name,
A shivering horror crept through all my frame,
A damp, cold, chill, as if a snake or toad,
Had started unawares across my road ;
Yet I kept silence : still thy spleen or pride 45
(Thy better demon absent from thy side)
Urg'd thee to new assaults. . THERE IS a time,
When slowness to resist, becomes a crime ;
'TIS HERE! the hour of sufferance now is o'er,
And scorn shall screen thee from my arm no more. 50

Unhappy

Unhappy dotard, see! thy hairs are grey—

In fitter lists thy waning strength display:

Go, dip thy trembling hands in coward gore,

And hew down Wests and Copleys by the score;

But touch not ME, or, to thy peril know, 55

I give no easy conquest to the foe.

Come then, all filth, all venom as thou art,

Rage in thy eye, and rancour in thy heart,

Come with thy boasted arms, spite, malice, lies,

Smut, scandal, execrations, blasphemies; 60

I brave 'em all. Lo, here I fix my stand,

And dare the utmost of thy tongue and hand,

Prepar'd each threat to baffle, or to spurn,

Each blow with ten-fold vigour to return.—

But WHAT is HE, that, with a Mohawk's air, 65

“ Cries havock, and lets slip the dogs of war ?”

A bloated mass *, a gross, unkneaded clod,

A foe to man, a renegade from God,

* Now respecting "bloated masses," and illiberal reflections on natural infirmities in general, most admirable are the observations of Peter Pindar. "I may have said, that a fellow with the form of the letter Z, who publicly attacks an unfortunate woman for a disorder of which the Divine Being is the sole Author, is little less than a demon or a fool." Peter alludes to a couplet in the Baviad, in which Mrs. Robinson (the *unfortunate woman* here meant) is said to be moving on crutches towards the grave to light and wanton measures. It is probable that neither Peter nor the lady understood a syllable of what they read; otherwise they must have seen, that no reflection was intended on her "disorder," whoever was the cause of it: but on the improper use she made of what the pious Peter is pleased to call a divine visitation.

I did not think to waste another word on myself; but now I am on the subject, I will just observe, that the "friend whose ruin I meditated" has the justest of all possible claims to the patronage and protection of the immaculate Peter.

As I am not quite certain that he has commissioned Peter to fling down the gauntlet for him, I shall say little at present. Many years ago, I drew up an *attested* account of the rise, progress, and termination of this dear "friend's" connection with me. I have kept it concealed from every eye, and did, indeed, intend to destroy it; because I have no longer a wish to disturb the repose of an impotent enemy. It is, however, in Peter's power to compel me to publish it in my own defence

From noxious childhood to pernicious age,
 Separate to infamy, through every stage. 70

CORNWALL remembers yet his first employ,
 And shuddering tells with what infernal joy,
 His little tongue in blasphemies was loos'd,
 His little hands in deeds of horror us'd :
 While mangled insects strew'd his cradle o'er, 75
 And limbs of birds distained his bib with gore.

defence—and, as some encouragement for him to recur again to an affair of which he is as ignorant as of every thing else, I will assure him—I am about to speak a bold word—that in the narrative I have ready for the press, he will see his protégé depicted, and *most truly* depicted, with a perverseness of head, and a depravity of heart, worthy of all his envy! Meanwhile I congratulate the gentleman on his alliance with Peter Pindar, and the “unfortunate woman” his associate. It does him honour. Peter Pindar, Mrs. R——, and the Rev. Mr. ——, do, in fact, form such a constellation of chastity, morality, and piety, as has not often appeared to enlighten and sanctify this lower world!

Anon

Anon, on stronger animals he flew
(For with his growth his savage passions grew);
And oft, what time his violence fail'd to kill,
He form'd the insidious drug* with wicked skill; 80
Saw with wild joy, in pangs till then untry'd,
Cats, dogs, expire; and CURS'D them as they died!

With riper years a different scene began,
And his hate turn'd from animals to man:
Then letters, libels, flew on secret wings, 85
And wide around infix'd their venom'd stings;

* Let not the reader who shudders at this, therefore disbelieve it. Almost the first accounts I remember to have had of this man (and they were from one of his own profession, from one who knew him well), related to the execrable use he made of his knowledge as an apothecary's boy, in torturing and destroying animals.

All

All fear'd, where none could ward, the coming blow,
And each man ey'd his neighbour as his foe;
Till dragg'd to day, the lurking caitiff stood,
(Th' accursed cause of many a fatal feud), 90
And begg'd for mercy in so sad a strain,
So wept, so trembled, that the injur'd train
Who, cowering at their feet, a MISCREANT saw,
Too mean for punishment, too poor for law,
O'erlook'd ('twas all they could) his numerous crimes, 95
And shipp'd him off "to ape and monkey climes."

THERE, while the negroes view'd with new disgust,
This prodigy of drunkenness and lust,
Explore the darkest cells, the dirtiest styes,
And roll in filth at which *their* gorge would rise; 100

H

He

He play'd one master-trick to crown the whole,
And took, O Heavens! the sacerdotal stole!
How shook the altar when he first drew near,
Hot from debauch, and with a shameless leer,
Pour'd stammering forth the yet unhallowed prayers, 105
Mix'd with convulsive sobs, and noisome airs!—
Then rose the people, passive now no more,
And from his limbs the sacred vestments tore;
Dragg'd him with groans, shouts, hisses, to the main,
And sent him to annoy these realms again. 110

CORNWALL, that fondly deem'd herself reliev'd,
Ill-fated land! once more the pest receiv'd;
But, wary and forewarn'd, observ'd his course,
And track'd each slander to its proper source;
'Till indignation, wide and wider spread, 115
Burst in one dreadful tempest on his head.

Then

Then flight, pale flight, ensu'd !—'T WERE long to trace
 His mazes, as he slunk from place to place ;
 To count, whene'er unearth'd, what pumps he bore,
 What horse-ponds, till the country he forswore, 120
 And, chac'd by public vengeance up and down,
 (Hopeless of shelter) fled at length to town :
 Compell'd in crowds to hide his hated head,
 And sponge on dirty whores for dirty bread.

* * * * *

LO, HERE THE REPTILE ! who, from some dark cell,
 Where all his veins with native poison swell,
 Crawls forth, a slimy toad, and spits and spues,
 The crude abortions of his loathsome muse, 130
 On all that Genius, all that Worth holds dear,
 Unsullied rank, and piety sincere ;

While

While idiot mirth the base defilement lauds,
And malice, with averted face, applauds !

Lo, HERE THE BRUTAL SOT ! who, drench'd with gin,
Lashes his wither'd nerves to tasteless sin ;
Squeals out (with oaths and blasphemies between)
The impious song, the tale, the jest obscene ;
And careless views, amidst the barbarous roar,
His few grey hairs strew, one by one, the floor ! 140

Lo, HERE THE WRINKLED PROFLIGATE ! who stands
On nature's verge, and from his leprous hands
Shakes tainted verse ; who bids us, with the price
Of rancorous falsehoods, pander to his vice,
Give him to live the future as the past, 145
And in pollution wallow to the last !

Enough!—

Enough!—Yet, Peter! mark my parting lay—
See! thy last sands are fleeting fast away;
And, what should more thy sluggish soul appal,
Thy limbs shrink up—THE WRITING ON THE WALL!—150
O! check, a moment check, the obstreperous din
Of guilty joy, and hear the voice within,
The small, still voice of conscience, hear it cry,
An Atheist thou *may'st* live, but can'st not die!

Give then, poor tinkling bellman of three-score! 155
Give thy lewd rhymes, thy lewder converse o'er;
Thy envy, hate—and, while thou yet hast power,
On other thoughts employ the unvalu'd hour;
Lest as from crazy eld's diseaseful bed,
Thou lift'st, TO SPIT AT HEAVEN, thy palsied head, 160
THE BLOW arrive, and thou, reduc'd by fate,
To change thy phrenzy for despair too late;

Close thy dim eyes a moment in the tomb,
 To wake for ever in THE LIFE TO COME,
 Wake to meet HIM whose "Ord'nance thou hast slav'd*,"
 Whose mercy slighted, and whose Justice brav'd!

For ME—Why should'st thou with abortive toil,
 Waste the poor remnant of thy sputtering oil,
 In filth and falsehood? Ignorant and absurd!
 Pause from thy pains, and take my closing word; 170
 Thou canst not think, nor have I power to tell,
 How much I SCORN and HATE thee—so, farewell.

* ——— the lust-dieted man

That slaves thy ordinance, &c.

KING LEAR.

POSTSCRIPT

POSTSCRIPT

TO

THE THIRD EDITION.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1800.

A THIRD Edition of the "Epistle to Peter Pindar" being called for, I have thought it expedient to make some additions to the Postscript; not, certainly to apologize for any part of it, but simply to do away the misrepresentations of Peter's "zealous advocates" in the Opposition Papers.

Before I begin, I must be permitted to shew a little honest exultation at the uncommon success of the "Epistle." It is not yet six weeks since it was first published, and already two large editions have been sold! At such a season, so rapid a sale, I believe, is unprecedented. Can a stronger proof be required of the pleasure with which the virtuous part of the community (the eternal objects of Peter Pindar's dread and hatred) have seen the
miscreant

miscreant stripped at length of his ideal terrors, and held forth to their scorn and indignation, a profligate old man, feeble from years, more feeble from vice, provoking death with the frenzy of a demon, yet clinging to life with the horror and despair of a blasphemer and an atheist!

On the publication of the Epistle, as I mentioned in the Postscript to the Second Edition, I received a number of letters (and, let me now add with becoming pride and gratitude, from some of the worthiest characters in the kingdom) thanking me for the castigation I had inflicted on the wretched subject of it: Hoc juvat et melli est.

I received also, about the same time, the following:

“ SIR,

“ You have obliged the world in the chastisement
 “ you have given that worthless ————” (*I must observe that the blanks are all filled up in the original letter, which is left with my publisher*)—“ Peter Pindar. He is a most notorious ————
 “ and was actually ———— in the Bird-Cage Walk
 “ with one of the people belonging to the ————. But if
 “ you are acquainted with ————, he can give you some in-
 “ formation. He has been attacked on that point in ‘The
 “ Times’ of the 10th, 19th, 26th, 28th, and 30th of March,
 “ 1789.

“ Yours,” &c.

Though

Though this information was new to me, who, from my habits and connections, knew less of Peter Pindar than most people, yet was I not altogether so great a stranger to his general character, as to be surprised at any additional instances of his depravity. For that day, however, I said nothing; but on the next, Peter's evil genius having prompted him, in the interim, to send a most scurrilous advertisement to the Morning Post, that I might not bely my asseveration*, I instantly put the letter into the hands of my publisher, and, at the same time, commissioned him to advertise for the papers in question.

Peter, and his "numerous friends," who were in the secret, took the alarm, and foolishly endeavoured to intimidate me from

* "Prepared each *threat* to baffle or to spurn,

"Each *blow* with ten-fold vigour to return."

Peter probably regarded this as an idle menace. He has already found it realized to his cost: and I here inform him, that this is but "the beginning of his sorrows." I will make no attack; but prompt, and signal, and "ten-fold" retribution shall be sure to follow every blow he aims at me. His stupid fabrications (for the miserable wretch has now lost even the faculty of lying with any ingenuity) I shall never notice; but overwhelm him, in my turn, with irrefragable truths, with which I have been furnished for the purpose: and if his "moral character"—(the moral character of Peter Pindar!!!) and if his "moral character" be, as he says, "a fine haunch of venison," he may rest assured that, in the words of Shakespeare, it shall speedily be blown into abhorrence!

K

my

my purpose by the following letter*, of which I immediately determined to publish a fac-simile (*See the annexed Engraving*), for two reasons: first, that no doubt might remain as to the writer of it; and secondly, to shew those who may be haunted by such bug-bears in future, that they are the most harmless of all harmless things, and only frightful to those who send them.†

Nothing can so clearly point out the desolate and lonely condition of this wretched man, as the not being possessed of a single friend in the world, to put him in mind of his rapid approaches to dotage. Approaches did I say? Nay, what but dotage itself could have produced the foregoing letter? Surely our modern Peribomius cannot be weak enough to suppose I am to be intimidated by such contemptible artifices!—Sic notus Ulysses? No, no, honest Peribomius, there is not a thing upon earth I despise so

* I trust it will not be forgotten that this was several days previous to the first appearance of the Postscript; and was, indeed, the sole and immediate cause of my writing it—in consequence of the resolution I have just mentioned; from which nothing shall tempt me to recede.

† I have been completely justified in both.—Peter Pindar's rage on seeing it in print, rose to a pitch of absolute madness; while of the many thousands besides who have looked at it, not one, perhaps, has had the curiosity to read it through. All—all, at least, that I have either seen or heard of, have invariably turned from it with every mark of pity and contempt.

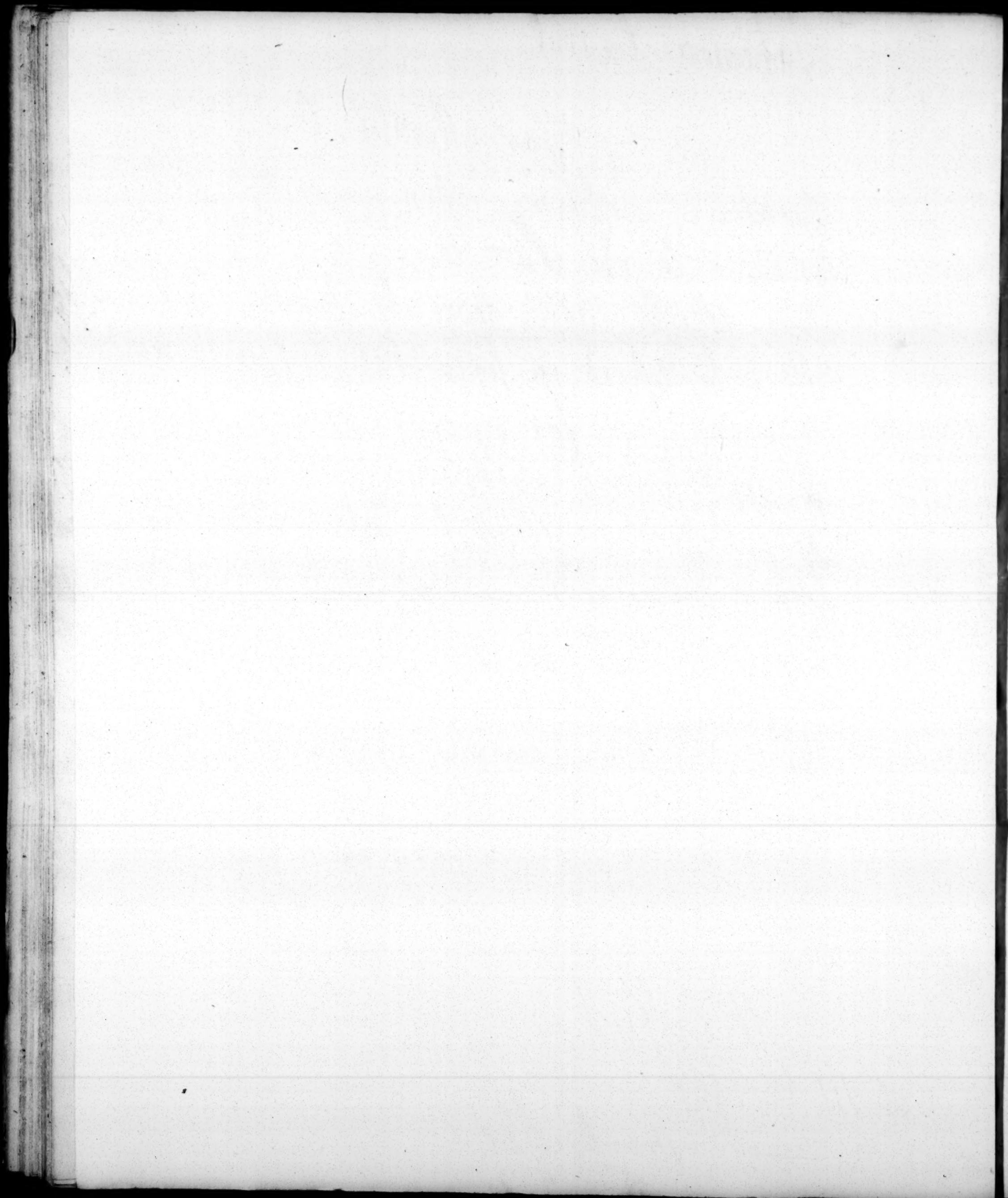
much

Infamous Cascal

Your attempt to stamp the
Character of Villainy upon a certain person
is traced to its ~~source~~; — the Bird
Cage Walk shall have its Reward — not only
shall it be repaid in principal, but with ample
Interest! — for by God, both yourself,
& your horrid supporters shall feel a Venge
so prompt & so effectual that you will be excu
from relating it — nor will the fate of the
Tyrant Pitt, be waited for, (tho' so fast
approaching) — say your prayers, Recd.!

& god have mercy upon your Soul..

Mr. Gifford —
at Mr Wrights —
Bookseller



much as thy threats; unless, peradventure, it be thy praise. Ad populum phaleras. Carry them to **** and *****. It is needless to put on thy cat-a-mountain looks to me, and affect the ruffian; "Captain! for what, you abominable damn'd cheater? for tearing a poor whore's ruff in a bawdy-house?" Tut, man! I know thee, intus et in cute, and fearlessly pronounce thee a most despicable poltroon; a white-liver'd, crest-fallen, and thrice-beaten coward.

"*Prompt* vengeance."—Poor broken-winded dotard, how art thou to obtain it? It is so long since thou wast accustomed to mix up drugs for the cats and dogs of thy master's neighbourhood, that thou hast probably forgot the ingredients: Add to this, that drunkenness and debauchery have made thy hands too unsteady for a pistol, and too feeble for a stiletto. Where then is thy "prompt vengeance?" "Go, go, Jeronymo! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee;—leave fighting o'days and foining o'nights, and begin to patch up thy old body for Heaven:" above all, write no threatening letters, at least to me—be satisfied with my scorn and detestation, and do not waste thy last poor puff in provoking my ridicule and contempt.

The admirers of *delicacy* and Peter Pindar will doubtless ask, why I have not tamely submitted to his unprovoked malignity, like my betters?

————— I'll not answer that:

But say it is my humour; is it answered?

I know

I know of no statute in Peter's favour that prescribes how long his abuse shall be borne unnoticed; nor have I heard of any laws that invest him with a sacro-sanct character. Since his "Pindariana" (the essence of stupidity and nonsense) his poetical reputation is almost as low as his moral one; and both may be assailed with equal ease and advantage. Add to this, that I have endured his insolence for many years without reply, and that I think fit to do so no longer.

I confess, now that I have been forced on the employ, that I shall feel much pleasure in stripping this Saracen-headed Scarecrow, and shewing those who stood in awe of the fluttering of his miserable rags, what a bald, and shapeless, and uncouth block lay under them! Yes, I shall speedily see the day when even dogs will lift up their legs against him, and each of his besotted admirers cry out with Caliban in the play,

————— What a thrice double ass

Was I, to take this DRUNKARD for a God,
And worship this DULL FOOL!

While, however, I am perfectly satisfied with the method I am pursuing, I cannot but express my astonishment that no one of the many hundreds he has wantonly and wickedly libelled, should have had recourse to the laws of his country for redress. I learn from the "Anti-Jacobin Review," that when Lord Lonsdale was
about

about to do one good act, and prosecute the fellow, he crept, and cringed, and fawned, and kissed the feet, and licked the spittle of every retainer in his lordship's family—So HE ESCAPED—and so has a long course of impunity given an air of courage to the most tame and heartless coward that ever insulted the worth, and virtue, and spirit, and dignity of a country!

To return to the ADVERTISEMENT. It soon produced something better than the contemptible scrawl I have just noticed; for it brought me the papers I wanted. The following extracts (sufficient for every purpose) are from the three first which I took up:

“*Times, March 19th.*”

“There is no palace into which ‘foul things sometimes intrude not;’ witness the *Pages*. And there is actually now a *Kitchen Rat* at Buckingham House, that was caught, about twelve months since, in a trap with *Peter Pindar*, in the *Bird-Cage-Walk*, but let loose again on condition of amendment. If this same rat and *Peter Pindar* continue their disloyal and ***** intercourse, let them beware,” &c.

“*Times, March 26th.*”

“We advise *Peter Pindar*, alias, the Cornish Apothecary, alias the Plantation Parson, alias the low-doer of a fallen print, to restrain his goose’s quill against the loyalty of other prints,

L

“and

“ and recollect that though his doggerel is too contemptible for
 “ notice—his itch for treason, and the *Bird-Cage Walk*, may
 “ endanger his ears.”

“ *Times*, March 28th.”

“ The impudence of the *Bird-Cage Walk* hero, *Peter Pindar*,
 “ in the fallen print, the *damnation* of which his stupidity has
 “ completed, is very much in the style of this motley renegade—
 “ half apothecary, half parson,” &c.

HERE then, I meet the insidious insinuations of Peter's “ numerous friends.”—In the second Edition of the Epistle, I contented myself with REFERRING to my authorities, and I was calumniated. I have now gone farther, and PRINTED them. And *still* I fearlessly affront their artifices! and *still* I throw myself, with manly confidence, on the unsophisticated sense of my country!

I must here observe, that the enemies of the established order of things in Church and State find Peter Pindar too useful an Ally, to be lightly given up. He will continue, therefore, in spite of his depravity, to receive as much support as shame will allow, from all such publications as are either secretly, or avowedly, hostile to the duration of either. Not, indeed, that the conductors of those works, as might be suspected from the character

racter of their protégé, aim at absolute anarchy and atheism—No; less would, probably, satisfy them; but to effect even this, whatever it may be, much previous confusion is necessary; much abuse of the Monarchy; much open contempt of the Priesthood; and much indecent ridicule of every sacred and social tie.—For all this—none so fit as the man before us, who like the blind and bloody villain of antiquity, “Sæpius ab——et——et——non secus ac tela, quæ et ipsa cæca et improvida feruntur, in OPTIMUM QUEMQUE contorquebatur.”

All of this description, then; all, in short, who have either profited, or who expect to profit, from Peter's crimes, and who cannot, in sound policy, abandon him, I utterly reject as my judges;—but I demand of every impartial person, whether I can be said with any appearance of justice, to have forged or “made” (for that, I see, is the favourite word) “a charge against Peter Pindar?” If I am answered in the affirmative, then is every one who mentions a report which he has casually heard, giving at the same time, his authority for it, a *fabricator* of that report. But this is too absurd to be dwelt on. After all, what have I done? I have, as the Morning Chronicle (no “zealous advocate” of mine) observes, “made an allusion, &c. :” that is, I have simply adverted to a REPORT, NOT PRIVATELY CIRCULATED, NOT COMMUNICATED IN CONFIDENCE, BUT OPENLY, AND FEARLESSLY INSERTED, AND REPEATED USQUE AD NAUSEAM, IN A PUBLIC PAPER—

PAPER—WHERE IT HAS REMAINED (UNCONTRADICTED, AND UNQUESTIONED, AS FAR AS I KNOW) FOR THE SPACE OF TWELVE YEARS, DURING WHICH IT HAS PROBABLY PASSED THROUGH TWELVE TIMES TWELVE THOUSAND MOUTHS! I added nothing of my own; I hinted at no ulterior information on the subject; but honestly referred for what I knew to the sources voluntarily pointed out to me.

“O! but, say the ‘friends’—not of Peter Pindar, for he, poor wretch, has none, but of the cause he is yet supposed capable of serving, “the allusion is indelicate.” Indelicate!!! Hath the man who has blasphemed his Maker*, reviled his Sovereign; who,

* To know the highly respectable Editor of the Anti-Jacobin Review, is to be fully assured that he is incapable of advancing any circumstance on light or doubtful authority. The impious exclamations which he charges on Peter, and which are almost too horrible for belief (p. viii), have been confirmed to me since the Preface was written, by a gentleman who heard the infuriate old man utter them!

I have also seen within these few days, a person of unimpeachable credit, who assured me, with a look of horror, that he had dined in Peter Pindar’s company not many weeks since, and that, when the lady of the house (whose name and family I know) asked him, if he liked pigeons, the wretch replied, “I like them “so well, that if the Holy Ghost were to come into this room in the shape of a “pigeon, I would catch, and eat him!!!”

The “friends” of Peter, the advocates of delicacy, may here perhaps, censure me again; and, indeed, I tremble at what I have written. I shall recur no more, therefore, to these anecdotes (which are both as true as truth itself), though I take

leave

in the language of the Anti-Jacobin Review (p. 467), "has grown grey in calumny, and made it the employment and delight of his life to ridicule the wise, to degrade the dignified, and to torment the inoffensive and virtuous," has that man, I ask, any claim on the world to be treated with delicacy? Has he any on ME? ME, whom he has wantonly, and unjustly attacked *;

leave to add, at the same time, that my silence will proceed from higher motives than the apprehension of wounding the ear of those who can contentedly listen to this, and worse than this, on the simple condition of its being employed in the furtherance of Atheism and Treason.

* As Peter Pindar's ribaldry has now few purchasers—for what man of sense will admit the sweepings of old stalls into his house? what peaceable subject, incentives to sedition? what husband, provocatives to adultery? what father, gross and fulsome obscenity? what good man, dull and impious buffoonery?—I have extracted for the service of such as may yet think his coarse and clownish fabrications worth perusal, the following "delicate" passages, which constitute nearly the whole of his "most interesting Postscript."—I must premise, that the pretended cause of opening this torrent of abuse on me, was a criticism which I never wrote; nay, which Peter was well assured I never wrote.—

" Little squinting Master Æsop Gifford, a rhyme-monger and critic, although some years ago actually a Cobbler in the little town of Ashburton, in the County of Devon, has performed in several characters since his elevation from his stall at Ashburton, having been created arbiter elegantiarum to the honourable House of ———; in which laudable situation he acquitted himself with so much dexterity and satisfaction to his employer, as well as

M

" great

against whom he has spared no brutality of insult, no charge however foul, no falsehood however gross, no crime however

“ great reputation to himself, that he was appointed bear leader to his hopeful son,
 “ to conduct him through the refined dominions of Italy, and to point out to him
 “ the beauties of painting and sculpture, the knowledge of which little Æsop had
 “ acquired, partly by inspiration, and partly from the most excellent engravings in
 “ wood at the heads of ballads, which surrounded and adorned the inside of his
 “ humble mansion, that is to say, his stall; especially a portrait of St. Crispin at
 “ work, forming a beautiful frontispiece to a ballad, whose well-known exordium
 “ floweth poetically, thus :

“ A cobbler there was and he liv'd in a stall,

“ Which serv'd him for parlour and kitchen and all, &c.

“ And which portrait of St. Crispin being represented with a crook back and squint-
 “ ing eyes was often supposed by the apprentice girls and stable boys of the town,
 “ who were accustomed to lean on his bulk to hear his poetry and jokes, I say this
 “ homely portraiture of the tutelar Saint of Cobblers was supposed by those his
 “ companions, to be a likeness of himself; which idea he cunningly encouraged,
 “ having not only an itch between his fingers, but a brother itch in his mind, to
 “ cut a figure in print.”

“ But to proceed—I said to myself, What have I done to this fellow that he
 “ should so sluice me with the muddy and stinking torrent of abuse?”—(*Be it re-
 membered that at this time, I had not uttered one syllable against him!*) “ I must
 “ confess that I have at times smiled at the unmeaning noisy lines of two wretched
 “ things called Baviad and Mæviad; and smiled, moreover, at the self-consequence
 “ of their author.—I may have said that if Master Æsop Gifford, instead of
 “ Baviads and Mæviads had only composed Cobleriads, he would have been more

“ at

hateful—If he has, I do not feel it, and will not acknowledge it.
On the contrary, I will persist, as I happen to be called forward

“ at home on the subject; and really no young man was keener in his profession
“ than little Æsop with his paring-knife in his hand—in short, he was the cobbling
“ wonder of Ashburton and its vicinity, as no one of his profession, like him

“ (So shining was his genius) knew

“ The constitution of a shoe;

“ To put a heel-tap (we'll suppose,) *Pure, quod hand decent placet beta!*

“ Or mend a sole, or add a nose!

“ And as for an old boot, in truth,

“ He gave it the black bloom of youth,

“ Eke comely ears to an old patten,

“ Till some vile demon cry'd “learn Latin.”

“ I believe that I *may* have asserted that there is so much flatulence in those compo-
“ sitions, that his Muse, previously to her beginning her song, must have made a
“ hearty dinner upon boiled peas, a vegetable possessing much flatulent energy.

“ I *may* have asserted that Stephen Duck the Thresher was a much superior poet to

“ Gifford the Cobbler; as honest Stephen wrote common sense, and from the

“ heart, and Gifford from a confused muddy brain, without feeling, and in gene-

“ ral, without the power of exhibiting a meaning. I *may* have asserted as much,

“ and more than that: I do assert it now, that the Thresher is a better writer than

“ the Cobbler. I *may* have said, that when a man receiveth subscription-money

“ for a work, and without any intention to produce that work, he is a literary

“ swindler, and deserveth a rope. I *may* have asserted that the dirtiest of all occu-

“ pations is a Pimp. I *may* have said, that the wretch who can write lampoons on

“ the

by new provocations, in laying before the public, a series of enormities, at which, indeed, they may sicken, but which shall not the less for that be displayed in all their hideousness.

I ought, perhaps, to apologize for the terms I use in speaking of “this reverend vice, this grey iniquity, this father ruffian,” this Peter Pindar, in short.—Our nice mouths, as Milton calls them, can only accommodate themselves to silken words * :

—— tenero latet ulcus in ore

Putre, quod haud deceat plebeia radere beta !

But I leave them to their fate.

“ the patrons who took him from the dunghill and placed him in a situation of
 “ respectability, is a scoundrel. I *may* have said, that a fellow with the form of
 “ the letter Z, who publicly attacks an unfortunate woman for a disorder of which
 “ the Divine Being is the sole author, is little less than a demon and a fool.—And
 “ finally, I *may* have declared that the wretch who, after the most important favours
 “ conferred on him by a friend, can, by the most infernal machinations, meditate
 “ the ruin of that friend, to pave the way for his own ambitious consequence, is a
 “ villain.—But what is all this to *Æsop*?—These reflections might have been gene-
 “ ral ; but unfortunately for me they have been considered as particular, so that cer-
 “ tain folk have positively sworn, in the language of an old ballad, “ that was levelled
 “ at me.”

* I must be understood here to refer to the case of those who *repel* an unjust at-
 tack : To *make* it, it seems, no such squeamishness is necessary. Tenderness,
 and delicacy, and above all, *candour*, are solely for the injured !

Here

Here I should have finished, had I not observed the following passage in a periodical publication, which, on account of its singular happiness, I suppose, has been since re-echoed far and wide: "It is wonderful that two men who have not been sparing of their satire, cannot bear an attack."

I had lived many years in that state of literary indolence, to which both habit and constitution incline me, when I wrote the Baviad, with a view to check, if possible, that inundation of bad taste, which, though now nearly forgotten, threatened at that time to overwhelm us with more than Gothic barbarism. The satire was not personal, for I was wholly unacquainted with the fraternity whose works I censured. It provoked, however, as I foresaw, a world of enmity; and for many years, nay even to the present moment, there has not been a Review, or Magazine, or Newspaper*, into which these poor people, or their admirers,

* I must here take the liberty of quoting a short passage from the Baviad, p. 59.
 "Most of these fashionable writers were connected with the public prints. Della Crusca was a worthy coadjutor of the mad and malignant ideot who conducted The World. Arno and Lorenzo were either proprietors or editors of another paper. Edwin and Anna Matilda were favoured contributors to several, and Laura Maria, from the sums she squandered in puffs, commanded a corner in all." To this, I may now add, that Antony Pasquin confessed "he had set on foot more newspapers than any other existing personage," and that Peter Pindar, the "great," the "celebrated" Peter Pindar, has long since descended from the digni-

could gain admittance, in which I have not been hotly assailed with epigrams, odes, sonnets, sarcasms, reproaches, and I know

ty of an Ode-writer, to the lowest pitch of literary degradation, that of a hack scribbler in a news-paper for twenty shillings a week!!!

This is a matter of course. Every reptile of Peter's species finds the ordinary progress of the press too slow for the discharge of his venom, and instinctively crawls to a daily paper, where he can void it momentarily. Still I cannot but wonder that, after he had been dismissed from two news-papers (two, that I know) for positive incapacity, a third (I speak of *THE ORACLE*) should have been found desperate enough to hire him. Does pre-eminence in infamy atone for deficiencies of every other kind? With some, I fear it does: with Peter Pindar's friends, it is no longer a question.

When I consider the qualities of this wretched man; when I behold him ignorant and uninformed, utterly unacquainted with the learned languages, and with barely french enough to read a child's fable; when I look at his verse and see that I must toil through pages of dullness and rancour, and disloyalty, and grossness, and impiety, to get at one poetic expression; and when I find his prose, a coarse and barbarous jargon, infinitely below that of the lowest contributors to the trash of Hogg and Noble, I am lost in amazement at the notice he has received, and the mischief he has wrought!

With no arms but an impenetrable head (I speak figuratively, for, in strict terms, it is penetrable by an oaken staff), and a heart callous and dead to every feeling of generosity, and honour, and pity, and remorse, and duty, and affection, and truth, and virtue, has this man been enabled to promote, in no common degree, the recent convulsions of the empire! If the bonds of society have been loosened, if the gradations of rank have been trampled down, if the members of government have been traduced with a wantonness hitherto unknown, and if the
life

not what. *Dii bene fecerunt*—for though I cannot boast of any talents, I possess a mind not lightly ruffled, and little, if at all affected by “these paper pellets of the brain.” I never, therefore, vented the slightest complaint, or made the least reply. How can it be said, then, that I cannot bear an attack? Peter Pindar has been in the habit of abusing me for fifteen years. I never, as I have already declared, wrote or uttered a single syllable against him. Even this is not all: for when the mad dotard raved and sputtered at me in all companies, on a supposition (real or pretended) that I wrote the “Pursuits of Litterature,” I was still so far from evincing any hostility, that I requested a most respectable gentleman to assure him, first, that I was a perfect stranger to the work imputed to me, and then, to remonstrate

life of the Sovereign has been more than once attempted, I do not scruple to assign the primary and pre-disposing causes of all to the licentious ribaldry of Peter Pindar. And this is the man whom I am required to treat with delicacy! And this is the man over whose enormities I am expected to draw a friendly veil!

I do not usually speak at random, and certainly I have not done so now. Since I was forced upon the castigation of this abandoned miscreant, I have examined his multifarious and multitudinous publications, and, as in the case of Antony Pasquin, made a sufficient number of extracts from them to justify every syllable that I have advanced. These, if ever I should have the good fortune to be called into Court, I would put, without comment, into the hands of the Bench; and I should not, I believe, leave the spot, without seeing this general libeller consigned to the pillory or the jail, both which, in the rude, but expressive language of his native place, *have long groaned for him!*

with

with him on the injustice of his conduct. It was not fear (as my reader will easily believe) that prompted me to take this step: I took it, notwithstanding—and the answer returned me was such as I might have expected, such, in short, as Peter Pindar only could have sent: “That I was a *liar*, and he should abuse me as much “as he liked!” Even this was more than three years ago; so that *I*, at least, can bear an attack.—But how stands it with Peter Pindar? The blustering bully, who, like another Drawcansir, threatened to level whole ranks with his pen, is no sooner opposed with the same weapon, than he seeks to terrify his antagonist by threats of assassination, steals out, like a midnight thief, to deal his blows unawares, and when they fall, as they always will fall, on his own head, comes whimpering like a sick girl, with a pitiful paragraph to the morning papers. “The numerous friends of Peter Pindar highly approve of his late conduct.” !!!

These numerous friends, however, have been driven at length to express their “high approbation” in a manner sufficiently mortifying to so conceited an oaf as Peter Pindar. The parties, forsooth, are insignificant and their writings unworthy of notice. This is well. Even the publication that chuckled with delight over the foul and rancorous aspersions of a prelate venerable for his high place, more venerable for his boundless charity, his piety, and conscientious discharge of his duty; and an amiable, accomplished, and virtuous woman, whose only crime was exerting her talents in the service
of

her LORD and SAVIOUR;—even that publication has just discovered, that the subject which Peter has chosen is “ill adapted to his levity;” while the Morning Chronicle turns short round, and without crying *gare!* d—ms him for a fool and a blockhead! The same terms, it is true, are bestowed on me; but I am more accustomed to them; and, indeed, they fall so short of what I have experienced, that I am not merely satisfied, but thankful.

At all events, I have gained my point. I have reduced Peter Pindar to his proper level, and wrung from the mouths of his most strenuous supporters, a reluctant confession of his imbecility! Thus, at the trifling expence of being misrepresented, reviled, insulted, threatened, and way-laid, I have given security to the timid, and confidence to the modest. I have rescued Dignity, and Worth, and Talents, and Virtue, and Religion, from the malignant attacks of their bitterest foe; who, from this FATAL moment, will preserve a lowering silence, or if goaded on by want and infamy, or the instigations of his dastardly associates, to rave once more, will either find no hearers, or excite in those who may accidentally listen, a slight hectic of contempt, a momentary shivering of disgust—AND ALL WILL PASS AWAY!

PETER PINDAR'S ACCOUNT OF THE AFFAIR OF THE 18TH ULT.

I thought I had done, but Mr. Wright requests me to add Peter Pindar's Account, and his own, of the affair of the 18th of August. His own I shall not meddle with; but I have no objection to give Peter's; and here it is.

On looking at it a little more narrowly, I find it is signed "John Wolcot." Who is he? Peter Pindar we all know, but who, in the name of wonder, is this "John Wolcot?" Peter's character I have already given, and shall here give it again, as it is drawn by the hand of a master:

—— " I know him, a notorious LIAR,
Think him a great way FOOL, solely a COWARD;"

but he is nothing, no, nothing so great a liar, and fool, and coward as this John Wolcot! For example now——

" To the EDITOR of the ORACLE.

" *As much misrepresentation has taken place in some public
prints, zealous advocates*" (the Reader has probably seen some specimens of this zeal) "*in Mr. Gyfford's cause,*"—an infamous impostor, this John Wolcot! Peter Pindar can spell my name to a miracle. He has it constantly right in his "most interesting Postscript;" nay, in his fac-simile, as may easily be perceived, it is Gifford, with an *i*!—" *relative to my affair with that man, I*
" *claim*

"*claim your impartiality*,"—Good! *impartiality* is the word: for though Peter Pindar, as the chief supporter of that admired paper *The Oracle*, might have said gratitude, yet John Wolcott, who appears to have no kind of connection with it, could only say as before, *impartiality*,—"and beg you to communicate a true account of the matter: *Determined to punish a R******"—On turning to the fac-simile, I find this same word at length: this does not prove that John was the writer of that choice morsel, but only that great wits jump. As for the rest, honest John's *determination* to punish, puts me in mind of the Irishman who *determined* to marry on obtaining his own consent!—"that had dared propagate a report the most atrocious, the most unnatural, and most unfounded,"—If by this, he meant unfounded in the first instance, I have nothing to say to it here*; if any thing else, I refer to my transcripts from "*The Times*."—Let me do John justice, however; he only charges me with spreading what others, who ought to have known better, accuse me of fabricating! Indeed, he seems very indifferent about the matter; a crime more or less breaks no squares in John's arithmetic, and I am more and more persuaded of the truth of what has been told me, that the poor creature wished, like an over-drove ox, to remain quiet, but was reluctantly goaded forward by the brutal

* Except, indeed, that John's assertion will not go for much, as the Reader will certainly incline, long before he has gone through this article, to believe rather what John shall PROVE than what he shall SAY.

violence of his "numerous friends."—"I repaired to Wright's shop, "in Piccadilly, to catch him;"—Did John never hear of catching a Tartar?—"as I understood he paid frequent visits to his worthy friend and publisher."—John is justly surprised at this; he thinks with Peter Pindar, perhaps, that visits should only be paid to the night cellar in Castle Street.—"On opening the shop door, I saw several people, and among the rest, as I thought, Gyfford. I immediately asked him if his name was Gyfford. Upon his reply in the affirmative, without any further ceremony, I began to cane him."—Here is an omission of the press, which may be easily rectified. For "began to cane him," therefore, read "began to attempt to cane him." I must also further observe, that John speaks by a figure; for the cane, as my carpenter informs me, is an oaken staff.—"Wright?"—Here John hallucinates dreadfully, for Wright was at this time at Gravesend—"and his shopmen;"—another shocking mistake, for Wright has no shopmen at present; he has, indeed, a lad, and that is all—"and his customers immediately surrounded me;"—There is some unaccountable obliquity in poor John's head! The customers (as he is pleased to call them) were two, and no more. How they could surround him requires clearer conceptions than he possesses to explain—"and wrested the cane from my hand."—Misprision again, John! The "cane" was wrested from you by me, before you had struck a single stroke.—"I then had recourse to my fist, and really was doing ample and easy justice to my cause,"—

“*cause,*”—Worse and worse ! It was not to your fist, John, you had recourse, but to your open palm ; and the use you made of it was to wipe the blood from your eyes. If this was doing justice to your cause, so be it.—“*when I found my hands all on a sudden confined* “*behind me, particularly by a tall Frenchman.*”—All on a sudden ! Fie, John, fie ! the botchery of your miserable jargon would disgrace a tinker’s apprentice. For the rest, this flight of a disturbed imagination has staggered even your associates—for you had associates, I hear.—“*Upon this, Gyfford had time to turn round,* “*and with his own stick,*” (why not cane, John ?) “*a large one too,*” (this shews that you felt it, John) “*struck me several blows on the* “*head.*”—Here, John, I am almost tempted to lose sight of the respect due to your wonderful talents, and call you, in the good old language of our forefathers, “ a most impudent and case-hardened liar.” I never carried a stick in my life. The blows you received were from that which was once your own ; it is, as you say, a large one, and they were consequently sound ones. And now, John, I will tell you a secret—though, perhaps, you already guess it. You have received many canings and many horse-whippings in your time (*entre nous*, you have deserved many more), but none of them, I solemnly assure you, would have been more than cakes and gingerbread to the exquisite drubbing you would have received from me, had not the gentleman, whom, according to custom, you ungratefully belie and insult, fortunately for you, interfered, and checked my hand. Age

and infamy, John (for I am told that you are trembling on the verge of seventy, and dreadfully profligate), have made you weaker than a child; if you have learned this at the expence of a cracked pate, you have not bought your knowledge dear.—“ *I was then hustled out of the Shop, and the door was locked against me. I entreated them to let me in but in vain.*” The reason was plain enough, John. That “ poor dumb mouth,” the gash in your head, cried as loudly as it could for a surgeon, and it would have been “ fell cruelty” in them, to suffer you to delay your visit to him.—“ *Upon a tall Frenchman’s coming out of the shop, I told him that he was one of the fellows that held my hands.*”—That you told him this, John, I can easily believe; for it has many of the characteristics of your language: it is insolent, scurrilous, and false; but did you tell him nothing more, John? There are those who say you did. Yes, John, you added what, were I to repeat it after you, would flush with shame the cheek of those who, out of a tender regard, I presume, to the niceness of your feelings, would have every report of your amiable weaknesses smothered in the birth!—After all, John, why was this foolish paragraph inserted? Was it to shew your courage? It smacks terribly of the blusterings of a beaten coward.—But, tell me honestly, was it to shew your courage? Ah! John! John! have you grown grey-headed to no better end than this? Have three-score and ten years not yet taught you that old age has a privilege, that its impertinence is sometimes tolerated,

lerated, and that though, when joined, as in your case, with the most loathsome depravity, it necessarily generates disgust and horror, yet a just sense of its imbecility will (unless the provocation be too sudden for reflection) check the arm already raised to chastise it?—" *Before I quitted the door, I CONTRIVED* " *TO GET ADMISSION for the following Letter, written before the* " *action,*"—action! Yes, John, action is the word; but then you should have given the context:

— rixæ;

Si rixa est, ubi tu pulsas, EGO VAPULO TANTUM!

" *directed to Mr. Gyfford.*"

" *Mr. William Gyfford,*

" *As there are certain expressions that require* " *only a little of the severity of satire by way of a corrective, so* " *there are others of so malignant a nature as to demand a horse-* " *whip instead of words. Had you possessed something more of* " *the human form, I should have treated you as a Man; but as* " *things are, you must be contented to be whipped as a malicious* " *Monkey.*

" *J. WOLCOT.*"

" *August 18, 1800.*"

Never

Never since I first took up a pen did a wretch, at once so despicable and so nauseating as this John Wolcot fall under my notice. Antony Pasquin himself "is a plummet over him!" He wrote this "letter," we find, with an intent to convey it to me previous to the attempt at assassination. Guilt and terror, however, had so confounded the few ideas he yet possessed, that he omitted the delivery of it; and—when his meditated blows had returned upon his own head—pale, breathless, and affrighted, with the blood streaming down his face in twenty different directions, and his whole body convulsed with the agonies of his wound, he fumbles in his pocket for the letter that was to precede MY assassination, and, with a trembling arm, drops it in the shop!!!

And this perverse and absurd idiot, this gross and sottish moon-calf, this—what shall I call him? this John Wolcot, is not ashamed to confess all this! Nay more; with a countenance in which impudence and detection are struggling for the mastery, he crawls round to the Offices of his "zealous advocates," and prevails on them to publish, that "the numerous " friends of Peter Pindar highly approve of his late conduct!"

If those be also the friends of John Wolcot, I cannot conclude without tendering them my sincere congratulations—since, the very first time the name of this John appears in print, it is set
to

POSTSCRIPT.

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to as base, as odious, as stupid, and as cowardly a falsehood, as ever yet owned the signature of Peter Pindar !

There is still a little of this trash to be noticed ; but I am sick of it. I have done.

THE END.

Q

T. BAYLIS, PRINTER,
Greville Street, Hatton Garden.

POSTSCRIPT



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THE END

T. BAKER, PRINTER
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